(c) whether any concrete steps have been taken by Government under MIS in Tripura for pineapples;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to protect the growers from making distress sale when the prices fall below the economic level, this department implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) on the request of the concerned State Government. The loss/profit is shared by the State Government and the Central Government on 50:50 basis.

(c) No proposal has been received for the year 1999 and 2000 season from the Government of Tripura to procure pineapples under MIS.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Central aid to Rajasthan for drought

2910. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the severe drought conditions in many parts of the State of Rajasthan for the second consecutive year causing acute shortage of drinking water and fodder and the inhabitants of the affected areas moving to other places for their livelihood.

(b) whether the State Government have requested for the Central aid for relief work;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what is the nature and extent of Central aid to the State to meet the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The State Government of Rajasthan submitted a memorandum seeking assistance of Rs. 1144.40 crore from the National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR) in the wake of drought. The Central Team visited the State from 10th to 13th January, 2000 and taking into account the norms of assistance, funds available and programmes undertaken, recommended an assistance of Rs. 102.93 crore from the NFCR. The National Calamity Relief Committee (NCRC) considered this in its meeting held on 27.3.2000 and approved this assistance of Rs. 102.93 crore from NFCR. This amount was released to the

State Government by the Ministry of Finance on 31.3.2000. This was in addition to the allocation of Rs. 207.00 crore to the State under Calamity Relief Fund for 1999-2000.

Assessment of Average Rate of Crop Yield

†2911. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any assessment regarding average rate of crop yield in irrigated and non-irrigated land has been made by Government;

(b) if so, the rate of average crop yield of both the said areas separately; and

(c) the estimated average annual quantum of foodgrains in to be produced irrigated and non-irrigated areas of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) to (c) The Government have not made any official assessment of average rate of crop yield separately for irrigated and non-irrigated land at all-India level.

Suicide by Agricultural Labourers and Farmers

†2912. SHRI RAMA SHANKER KAUSHIK : PROF. RAM GOPAL YADAV : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of the farmers and agricultural labourers who have committed suicide all over the country for last six months alongwith the name of the State where the cases of suicides are maximum;

(b) whether it is a fact that the incidents of suicides being committed by the farmers and agricultural labourers in Punjab are increasing as compared to those in the other States of the country;

(c) if so, the number of suicides committed by the farmers and agricultural labourers as on date and whether Government have identified the reasons therefor and taken any action to prevent the same; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SBPBK SATYANARAYANA RAO) : (a) to (d) The Government of Andhra Pradesh had reported two cases of suicide by farmers during December 1999 due to failure of crops or indebtedness. The Government of Punjab has

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.